

won. I believe there are about 25, maybe more, who are currently medical students at Loyola in Chicago aspiring to be doctors. Now their life is complicated. They can't borrow money from the government to go to school. They are not eligible for any Federal assistance because they are technically undocumented.

So we created a program through our State where they would be able to borrow the money to go to school on one condition; for every year of schooling that is provided by these loans, they have to pledge 1 year as doctors to serve in underserved areas of our State, whether it is in the inner city or the rural areas.

So here are, at the moment, 25 aspiring DREAMers in the Loyola School of Medicine who will be giving us years of service in underserved communities in our State. Is that good for Illinois? Is it good for America? You bet it is. I am from downstate Illinois. There are many rural towns in our State that would beg for these doctors to come in so they can keep a local hospital open so they can have good medical talent when they need it.

These DREAMers, who are now protected DACA today, are questioning what their future will be with a new President. There were some powerful words spoken during the course of this campaign about immigration, but I am heartened by the fact that President-Elect Trump, after the election, said he wanted to try to bind the wounds of this country. When asked specifically about immigrants, after some of the harsh things he said during the campaign, he said many of these immigrants are terrific people.

Well, let me say to the President-elect, if you are looking for terrific people when it comes to immigrants, take a look at these DACA young people, take a look at these DREAMers. They are amazing.

I believe I have come to the floor 100 times, maybe more, to tell these DREAMer stories because it is one thing, as I have just done, to describe them in general, but it is another thing to get to meet them. Some of these young people have had the courage to step up and say: You can tell my story. I will send you a photo.

The story of one today is of Valentina Garcia Gonzalez. Valentina was 6 years old when her family brought her to the United States from Uruguay in South America. She grew up in the suburbs of Atlanta, GA. A very bright child, she learned English quickly. She said:

After that, I became my parents' right hand. Everything and anything that involved speaking to the outside world meant I was in the front, translating and representing my parents. It was a lot of responsibility for a young undocumented kid.

In addition to this responsibility, Valentina turned out to be quite a good student. In middle school she received the President's Education Award not once but twice—once from President

Bush and then again from President Obama.

In high school, Valentina was an honor graduate and an Advanced Placement Scholar. She was a leader in student government, a member of the Beta Club—a national academic honors program—and Peer Leaders, where she mentored younger students. She somehow also found time to be president of the school's environmental group and managed the varsity basketball team.

Valentina was quite a student, but Georgia State law bans undocumented students from attending that State's top public universities. As a result, she applied and was accepted to Dartmouth College, an Ivy League school in Hanover, NH. She is now a sophomore at Dartmouth, where she is a premed student majoring in neuroepidemiology. You see, Valentina's dream is to become a doctor, to help people, and to give back to her community.

To help pay for her few tuition, she works as a projectionist at a local theater. Keep in mind, as an undocumented student, she is ineligible for any Federal Government assistance. She still finds time to volunteer as a mentor for kids in the local community schools, and in a letter to me she said the following about DACA, President Obama's program:

I am beyond grateful because, by receiving DACA, the U.S. has given me an opportunity to give back to this country that has given me so much. This is my country. I have worked hard to prove myself worthy in the eyes of my American counterparts and knowing that I am in a weird limbo in regards to my legal status doesn't make me sleep any easier. My name is registered with the government, so I might be deported if they decide to end DACA.

Let me say clearly to Valentina and the other DREAMers like her. I am going to do everything in my power as a U.S. Senator to ensure that DACA continues and to protect them from deportation. Many came forward, against the best advice of their parents, who say: You are registering with a government that can deport you. But they had confidence that if they followed the law, as it was described to them, if they were open and honest, America would treat them fairly.

That is all I am asking. For the 740,000 currently protected by DACA, and for the others who are eligible for it, who will go through a background check and pay their fee, we are asking for fairness. These young people came here as kids. They had no voice in the decision to come to America. Now they want us to be their voice in terms of their future in America.

Would America be better if Valentina was deported back to Uruguay, a country where she hasn't lived since she was 6 years old? Will it be stronger if we lose Valentina as a doctor, serving a critical part of America? The answer is clear.

Now is the time for America, this Nation of immigrants, to come together and heal the wounds that divided us during the election. I hope President-

Elect Trump will understand and will continue the DACA Program that provides some fairness, some opportunity for these amazing young people.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Wyoming.

THE BUDGET

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I want to start off by reminding everybody of an old but very short Hans Christian Andersen story about an emperor who was convinced by two very clever weavers that they could make clothes that would be invisible to anybody who was unfit for a position or stupid or incompetent. As a result, everybody thought they could see the clothes, until one little boy said: The emperor doesn't have any clothes. And then everybody gasped and realized that was the case.

Well, we have kind of been weaving a budget through the years that is kind of like the emperor's clothes. We want everybody to be able to see them and think we are fit and competent and not stupid, but as this year quickly draws to a close, we are once again approaching a Federal spending deadline that will likely be postponed with yet another temporary spending bill. In the last 40 years, Congress has enacted 175 of these continuing resolutions to avoid doing its job. This will be the 176th continuing resolution since the modern budget process was established.

The November election results show the American people are eager for change. With a new President taking the oath of office on January 20, Congress has an opportunity and a responsibility to get back to work. One of our top priorities must be fixing America's broken budget process to provide our Nation with a responsible fiscal blueprint and help guide our spending decisions now and into the future.

Let me tell you about America's coming fiscal crisis. America is on a course for a fiscal disaster. Sadly, that is not going to surprise many people. We all know the statistics: \$20 trillion in debt, on track to grow to \$29 trillion in 10 years, unchecked entitlement spending that assumes 70 percent of the budget, and the imminent return of trillion-dollar deficits.

Everyone knows we are in deep trouble, but what is surprising is that Congress is not considering ways to fix it. The country's finances are in a perilous position and the Federal Government has refused to act. We pretend to see the clothes.

That is because, when it comes to spending money, Congress is kind of like a binge eater. We don't want to start our diet until right after the next dessert, and we never seem to run out of ideas for new desserts. That attitude has led to a mammoth, oversized debt burden that will crush future generations' prosperity.

The first step to spending within our means is to establish healthy habits. We should stock the fridge with fruits

and vegetables, not cake and cookies. Unfortunately, America's broken budget process does the opposite. It makes it easy for Congress to spend and spend without ever checking its fiscal waistline. Congress never has to consider the fiscally healthy options that would put our budget on a better path.

America's looming fiscal crisis actually has its roots in the way America's budget and spending process is laid out. This money funds activities that most people would associate with good government, such as national defense, education, and infrastructure spending. This is the portion of the budget that attracts the most congressional scrutiny. We have limits in place that make it difficult to spend more than what is allotted, and those limits are subject to fierce debate and negotiations every 2 years or so. We also must pass spending bills to fund these government activities every year, forcing a public debate about where taxpayers' dollars should be spent. This portion of the budget is not growing rapidly and is not the cause of our unsustainable fiscal course.

The real culprit is the other 70 percent of the Federal budget. This portion is spent automatically without regular congressional action or review. Let me say that again. The real culprit is the other 70 percent of the Federal budget. This portion is spent automatically without regular Congressional action or review. In just 15 years, it will consume all government revenues as debt, interest payments and entitlements continue to grow rapidly. There are no effective limits to the amount that can be spent on that side of the budget, at least until this spending drives America into bankruptcy.

This is how the budget process makes it easy to spend money. There is regular review and strict limits on the small and shrinking portion of the budget—the 30 percent—but the much larger automatic spending programs are not regularly reviewed and can grow almost without limit. Some automatic spending programs have a dedicated but insufficient source of revenue. For example, Social Security, Medicare, and unemployment benefits are funded in part—in part—by payroll taxes and insurance premiums.

This makes sense. If Congress is not going to regularly review a program, there should at least be a source of funding to ensure the program is sustainable. However, the automatic programs that receive dedicated revenues are grossly underfunded, and many others do not receive any dedicated revenues. That means our government is making promises to pay for these programs even though they do not have any idea where the money will come from.

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for these programs even though they do not have any idea where the money will come from.

This chart gives us a little bit of an idea. The chart shows the dedicated revenues for some of the largest automatic spending programs. For example, Social Security and Medicare are each funded in part with a dedicated payroll tax. However, payroll taxes are less than benefit payments. We can see the Social Security spending gap over the next 10 years is two and three-tenths trillion, or \$2,321 billion. Medicare's receipts cover only 54 percent of spending, leaving a funding gap of four and four-tenths, or \$4,365 billion.

These annual cashflow deficits grow worse every year of the budget window, and they will continue to deteriorate at a faster rate outside the budget window as millions of baby boomers continue to retire.

Now, I like to phrase this a little differently. On Social Security, the amount of spending versus the amount of revenue—\$12,000 billion in spending but only \$10,000 billion in revenue, which leaves a program deficit of \$2,321 billion. It is not being funded by Social Security now. Instead of revenue as a percentage of spending, I like to say we overspend by 18 percent.

On Medicare, \$9,590 billion—that is a lot of money—in spending, but the revenue is only \$5,225 billion. That is a deficit of \$4,365 billion. So revenue as a percentage of spending is 54 percent, but it is 46 percent overspent.

Some people will say we shouldn't worry about these programs because we collected money from previous generations that will cover the cost of these programs. They say we have "trust funds" to pay for these programs. But you can't trust these government trust funds. There is no way the Federal Government puts away cash to be used later; instead, they took these excesses as they came in, in past years, when we had fewer baby boomers, and that cash was spent in exchange for bonds being put in a drawer. The bonds are with the full faith and trust of the Federal Government, but that is not real money. In order to spend that, money has to be put in the drawer. Yes, there was a surplus in Social Security, but it was spent. Now we will continue to manufacture money to make those payments, but the government has no way to invest money.

As an accountant, I can tell you that the Federal budget operates on a cash basis, and previous Congresses spent that cash as soon as it came in—all the cash. There is no real money socked away to cover these costs. So when it comes time to pay for these programs, the only money the Treasury Department can rely on is these dedicated revenues. As the chart shows, they are not sufficient to cover spending, so the Treasury Department has to take extra money from taxpayers or borrow it in public debt markets.

Overall, the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office estimates that the

government will spend over \$35 trillion on automatic spending programs over the next 10 years, but this chart shows these programs will only collect \$15.5 trillion, or \$15,538 billion—\$15,538 billion but the spending will be \$35,333 billion. As a percentage of spending, that is 44 percent. Actually, that is overspending of 56 percent. We aren't even taking in half of what we promised. So guess what happens next. The Treasury Department will ask taxpayers and public debt markets for an additional \$20 trillion to pay for these programs.

That is why America is facing trillion-dollar deficits—overspending. "Deficit" is another word for "overspending." It doesn't sound quite as bad as "overspending." But that is why we are facing trillion-dollar overspending amounts in each year. That is why America's debt is \$20 trillion, on the way to \$29 trillion; it is overspending.

Let me talk about rising interest rates. To make matters worse, the historically low interest rates America pays on its debts are poised to rise, according to the latest signals from the Federal Reserve. That is why we have to do something, and we have to do something now. The interest is a mandatory expense—there is no way to avoid it—and it doesn't have any source of revenue other than the general fund. Now, we pay almost 2 percent interest on our \$14 trillion in publicly held debt—\$14,000 billion and we pay 2 percent on it. That is roughly \$220 billion a year, excluding the share paid to Federal revenues which goes back to the Federal budget. But a 2-percent interest rate is not the norm for our government. When interest rates rise, as they are expected to do in the next few years, the \$220 billion could more than triple. That will be \$700 billion, maybe \$800 billion a year spent on only the interest on our Nation's debt. That is more than we spend on national defense. That interest is a mandatory expense with no source of revenue.

So what is the bad news and the good news? That is the bad news, but there is good news too. Both the House Budget Committee, under the leadership of Chairman TOM PRICE, and the Senate Budget Committee have been working on solutions that would improve the way Congress considers budget legislation. Over the last year, the Senate Budget Committee has held a series of public hearings with expert witnesses, consulted with budget practitioners from both sides of the aisle, and sought advice from former chairmen. Members considered all the ideas presented and even entertained proposals to abolish the Budget Committee if it could be replaced with a better government structure. This yearlong effort demonstrated what successful budget reform should look like. I intend to pursue these reforms at every opportunity and enact as many as possible in the coming months.

At a minimum, we need to fix budget procedures in the Senate so that the

congressional budget is easier to pass and harder to ignore and easier to understand. The budget resolution is the only regular tool we have that forces Congress to examine all spending and revenues, including automatic spending, over a 10-year period. Unfortunately, the budget resolution has devolved into a purely political exercise, and that is often ignored. The last passed budget was good for about 3 months before waivers overrode the budget.

Congress cannot continue to lurch from crisis to crisis without meaningful, long-term budget plans. My reforms would fix congressional budgeting by reducing the political impediments to passing budget resolution. Budget proceedings would be more orderly and transparent, with less political "gotcha" amendments that define consideration of a budget resolution here in the Senate. My reforms would also make the budget meaningful by requiring a higher vote threshold for legislation that spends billions of taxpayer dollars without offsetting it—and offsetting it in a real way.

We also need to revise the concepts and rules that determine how we budget and estimate the cost of legislation. These outdated rules haven't been comprehensively reviewed and updated since 1967 and often lead to confusing or inaccurate estimates. A new commission of experts should update our Federal budget concepts for the 21st century.

We should also create new rules that encourage Congress to consider the annual appropriations measures on time under regular order. The current process has been completed on time only four times in the last 40 years. The last time was 1998, and that is when there was a lot of Social Security extra money spent. This is a disgrace. Congress should do its job on time and in an orderly fashion. It should not be negotiating a year's worth of spending in the weeks before the holidays like a college student cramming for midterms or maybe stuffing on spending like everybody is a budget Thanksgiving.

One of my proposals borrows an idea from the Wyoming State Legislature. They set aside a certain number of days every other year to consider only budget legislation. If a member wants to consider a nonbudget bill, which perhaps would be an emergency, they have to convince two-thirds of their colleagues to agree to take it up without any debate; otherwise, they stick to the spending.

I will also encourage enactment of Senator PORTMAN's bill to end government shutdowns and legislation to move the annual spending process to a biennial cycle so that it does not have to complete all 12 spending bills each year. Each agency would have 2 years of planning that they would be able to count on.

We need a fiscal course correction. Addressing America's long-term debt

crisis is a daunting challenge that cannot be left to future generations as it has been in the past. But the annual budget process is not designed to force through the serious reforms needed to put America's budget back on a sustainable trajectory, nor should an annual majority-driven process be empowered to do so. That is why former Senators Kent Conrad and Judd Gregg, the former Democratic and Republican Budget Committee chairs, have advocated for a bipartisan task force, operating outside the annual budget process, to solve the country's long-term fiscal crisis. A BRAC-style commission similar to what has been introduced by Senator COATS should be created to set a sustainable, long-term fiscal target and recommend policy options to achieve that target, and Congress must take up and consider those recommendations.

This institution cannot continue to willfully ignore these serious threats to our country's future prosperity. This is the major issue of our time, and substantive solutions should be considered on the floor of the House and Senate. I know it is fun to invent and spend on new programs, but Congress has to be the adult in the room. They have to recognize whether their emperor has clothes or not. They can't pretend to see.

These bipartisan reforms wouldn't solve all of our budget problems, but they are a promising first step toward unsticking the budget gridlock that has gripped Washington in recent years. More importantly, they would create healthy fiscal habits that would force Congress to recognize and be able to address the daunting fiscal challenges this country faces. This crisis isn't going to go away, and only Members of Congress can fix it. The American people have spoken, and we owe it to them to put this country on a better path. These reforms are a necessary first step, and Congress must enact them as soon as possible.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority whip.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, while he is still in the Chamber, let me express my gratitude to the chairman of the Budget Committee, Senator ENZI, for his leadership on these very difficult but very important issues.

One of the things I am most concerned about is that there no longer seems to be bipartisan consensus toward how to deal with our spending problems. We look at annual budget deficits and we look at the increase in the debt, and we know we have no current means to pay that back. While the Federal Reserve has basically made money free—in other words, interest rates are so low now, we don't have to pay our debt holders as much money now as we will in the future—we all know this is a ticking time bomb, with only about 30 percent of our Federal spending being discretionary or appropriated funds and roughly 70 percent

being on autopilot. As our interest rates go up more and more, that is going to crowd out more of that 30 percent that we need to spend on our Nation's priorities, like national security.

This is a very serious issue, and I am grateful to the Senator from Wyoming, the chairman of the Budget Committee, for his leadership. I look forward to working with him as we work together to try to come up with meaningful solutions.

21ST CENTURY CURES BILL

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, we are winding down the final days of the 114th Congress, and some of the work we have been engaged in is coming to fruition.

I spoke to the chairman of the Environment and Public Works Committee, who told me he thought the WRDA bill—the water resources development bill—was coming together and would likely be voted on in the House tomorrow.

I believe that Senator MCCAIN and Chairman THORNBERRY in the House—the Armed Services Committee—have a national defense authorization bill that on Friday will be voted on in the House and then will be coming over here to the Senate.

We know that we have to, by the December 9 deadline, pass an appropriations bill that will keep the lights on for the Federal Government for an undetermined, at this point, period of time, probably sometime into next spring, when we will have a new President and a new administration.

This afternoon in the House, they are going to be voting on another important piece of legislation that I wanted to talk about briefly. It is called the 21st Century Cures Act. This has been a product of a lot of methodical and very deliberate hard work on both sides of the aisle in both Chambers, and it will make a big difference in the lives of Americans because it will help make our country healthier and stronger.

As its name suggests, it will help develop medical treatments and cures for some of the most tragic health problems facing families today. Recently, I was at the 75th anniversary celebration at the MD Anderson hospital in Houston, TX, and it is the premier cancer facility in the country. Some time ago, the hospital started their own MD Anderson Moon Shots Program and is doing all that it can do to study and research various forms of cancer with the goal to eliminate cancer as a public health threat. Of course, we know that Vice President BIDEN, who was part of that 75th anniversary celebration at MD Anderson in Houston, and this administration have their own Cancer Moonshot Program to help eliminate cancer, and that will also be part of this 21st Century Cures bill. The whole idea of the Moonshot, even to the current generation, reminds us that at one time we thought putting a man on the Moon was impossible, outside the